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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 001076

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/10/2018
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTRY REVIEW FOR TITLE III SUSPENSION OF
LIBERTAD ACT - CHILE

REF: A. STATE 126578
[B](#). 08 SANTIAGO 00472

Classified By: E/POL Counselor Juan A. Alsace. Reason: 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) Post provides the following information in response to Ref A request. Responses are keyed to the specific questions identified in Ref A. Ref B is Post,s information covering the preceding six-month period.

Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights

[1](#)2. (C) The GOC has not taken any concrete visible steps in the last six months to promote the advancement of democracy or human rights in Cuba.

High Level Diplomatic Visits

[1](#)3. (U) President Bachelet plans to travel to Cuba in February 2009 to inaugurate the eighteenth annual International Havana Book Fair, which will focus on Chilean authors this year. Bachelet will be the first Chilean president to visit Cuba in 37 years.

Statements and Government Actions

[1](#)4. (C) Echoing sentiments found in paragraph 3 of Ref B, the Christian Democrat party (DC), part of the ruling Concertacion Coalition, continued to criticize Cuban politicians. DC members publicly accused the Cuban government of noncompliance with agreements formed in the Ibero-American Summit of 1996 regarding the existence of political prisoners, the lack of free elections, and the persecution of the independent press. Bachelet's February visit is reported to not include meetings with opposition leaders in Cuba, prompting DC Senator Jorge Pizzaro to state that "the President has the responsibility to represent all Chileans when traveling to Cuba."

[1](#)5. (U) Following the announcement of Bachelet's visit to Cuba, Foreign Relations Minister Alejandro Foxley publicly stated that the GOC is "very satisfied with the state of relations" with Cuba.

Humanitarian Aid

[1](#)6. (U) The Government of Chile sent two shipments of aid to Cuba following hurricanes Ike and Gustav. The cargo, totaling nearly 27 tons, included building materials, generators, non-perishable food, and medicine.

Bilateral Trade Agreements

¶17. (C) Ref B contains Post,s most recent information regarding trade figures with Cuba. Chile-Cuba trade is expected to increase significantly following the March 2008 ratification of a Chile-Cuba trade agreement. Both the GOC and Cuban government have moved to strengthen diplomatic relations, economic cooperation, and trade between the two countries.

Nature of Economic Investments

¶18. (U) There are no new economic investments outside of strengthened trade expected as a result of the aforementioned trade agreement.

Exchange Programs

¶19. (U) There are currently more than 400 university students from Chile studying in Cuba. This number is up from previous years. The Cuban government offers a limited number of scholarships to Chilean medical students studying in Cuba.

URBAN